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ABSTRACT

Talk, the use of language to accomplish purposes of varying degrees of significance in the child's language development, is a learning activity, guided by a teacher and practiced by the child. The purpose of this book is to show how important this skill, talk, is to the child and to present ways in which teachers can stimulate children's talking skills in the classroom. Topics of chapters are the nature of talk, things people do with talk, things which impinge upon talk, a talk model for the language arts classroom, designing a talk environment, and roles for the language arts teacher to consider. A bibliography concludes the book. (JM)

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TALK in the Language Arts Classroom

MARVIN L. KLEIN

Foreword by Robert C. Pooley

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Foreword

"The time has come," the Walrus said,
"To talk of many things;
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings."

Lewis Carroll,
Through the Looking Glass

In the cheerful rhyme of Lewis Carroll we find explicit the theme of this book: "The time has come . . . to talk of many things." The author rightly ascribes a position of major significance to the experience of talking, developing the thesis that children who talk will develop a command of the English language which is lacking to those who do not talk. To expand this thesis he first analyzes the social and psychological bases for talk, and from that analysis outlines procedures, activities, and goals for the language arts classrooms.

At the outset it is important to distinguish between talk and chatter. All children chatter in varying degrees of purpose, and this chatter has its proper place in the advancement of children's self-expression. It is their principal means of social growth as they exchange the common parlance of childhood. In any elementary classroom, chatter is continuous and tends to become boisterous until the group is called to order by the teacher. This chatter, important as it may be to the child's acceptance by peers, is not *talk* as our author defines it. Talk is the use of the language to accomplish a purpose of varying degree of significance in the child's development in the use of language. Talk, in this sense, is a

learning activity, is guided by a teacher, and is practiced by children. The intent of this book is to demonstrate how important this skill of talk is to the child, and how much ought to be done about it that is often not done. The common situation is that the teacher dominates the classroom and does most of the talking. As I said more than thirty years ago in *The Teaching of English in Wisconsin*,

> In both city and rural schools teachers tend to dominate the classroom more than they should, despite the many opportunities that oral English instruction provides for permitting pupils to plan, direct, and evaluate their own lessons. Panel groups, round tables, club meetings, dramatizations, and prepared programs—to cite a few of the devices that have been used with great success—were only very infrequently observed. Teachers dominated 83 per cent of the oral English lessons in rural schools, and 62 per cent of these in city lessons.

Although the study cited was made thirty years ago, the conditions observed and described have not changed greatly. Teachers still tend to talk too much, and children are given less opportunity to use talk creatively than leading educators deem advisable. Today, as in the past, a strong effort is required to impress upon teachers the significance of purposeful talk upon the language skill and growth of children with the development of an emphasis upon talk by children that is lacking in curriculums and in practice.

I am glad to recommend this book and its message to those who prepare teachers for the elementary grades, and to all teachers who have in their care the language development of children.

Robert C. Pooley
Emeritus Professor of English
University of Wisconsin, Madison

Preface

The study of oral language development and use occupies the professional lives of many and will undoubtedly continue to do so for many years. Research in selected areas of developmental psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics alone is altering our views of language and its role in our lives almost faster than we can record.

In view of this situation, it would appear somewhat audacious, if not naive, to address a topic as comprehensive and complex as "talk" in a work of this type. Yet in some senses, it was this very complexity which led to the project, this complexity coupled with the fact that classroom teachers are not allowed the leisure of awaiting final outcomes of new significant research or theory. The practicing teacher is forced by the nature of the teaching act itself to make constantly ongoing decisions about the kinds of talk a child is likely to use and the conditions under which that talk is used. In short, the teacher is always structuring or designing a talk curriculum component, albeit implicitly in many cases.

The thesis of this publication is that such "talk use structuring" should be explicit rather than implicit; that such should derive from assumptions the teacher has about the nature of talk and its uses; and that a reasonable talk curriculum model can be utilized to provide the kind of handles needed to assist the child in developing the widest ranging and the most important talk use skills. The general direction of

the work is from theory to research to practice, with the language arts teacher in mind at all three points.

To the reader an admonition is in order. This is admittedly a highly simplified account of this area. It does not pretend to be comprehensive as much as directional. To rhetoricians, psycholinguists, sociolinguists and developmental psychologists, my apologies for not addressing in depth issues that all could legitimately argue a need for. I hope, however, that the compromise between simplification and comprehensiveness results in bringing about a sense of order and direction to a problem area too often viewed as too complex by too many for too long.

Marvin L. Klein
State Department of Public Instruction
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What Is Talk?

Learning to read and write leaves the child alone with language in a way which differs from his previous experiences. This should not be made a sudden transition. The new activities should be preceded, accompanied and followed by talk.

John Dixon,
Growth Through English[1]

The human being is essentially a languaging creature. In perhaps its broadest and most basic definition, "language" is the human need to symbolize systematically. It is our primary distinguishing attribute.[2] In contemporary society, the individual depends upon language in every conceivable way. One judges the world through one's language, and is in turn judged by the world largely on the basis of one's language. The ability to use the language in diverse contexts and for diverse purposes must be viewed by the language arts teacher as a fundamental goal of the curriculum.

Language representation has a number of modes. For example, certain graphic representations like painting may be viewed as nonverbal language. Body language is also in this category. Talking and writing are the most commonly employed forms of language, and oral articulation, or talk, is the most fundamental. For communication purposes, however, writing constitutes less than ten percent of our language use. This is not to suggest that writing is unimportant in the language arts. However, it is oral language which appears first in the developing child and comes to represent the most commonly utilized of the language arts skills.

"Talk" as a language form bears essential and unique attributes not borne or shared by writing. Although the two are important manifestations of language, they are significantly different as modes of repro-

duction and in form of presentation. The notion that "print or script is talk written down" is simply not true.

Talk, for instance, tends to be more elliptical than writing. For example, sentence fragments constitute a large measure of oral discourse, yet no one is particularly upset by hearing such fragments. Because the immediate situation provides so many clues, the speaker can be understood with much less reliance than the writer on specific linguistic details. Talk, too, tends to be more informal than writing. Its syntax or language structure tends to be less stilted, less orderly, and more context-dependent upon factors such as voice tone, facial expression, hand and head movement; and less dependent upon the sentence structure which writing must attend to. Because talk and writing demand different physical-mental coordination, they require different degrees of mental effort from the learner. The joint development of talking and writing is a desirable thing and a complementary thing. One need not be an expert, however, to note that facility in one does not assure facility in the other. Some of the world's greatest writers have been intolerably dull talkers. Ralph Waldo Emerson once noted that the conversational abilities of Bronson Alcott, a writer of limited scope and depth, positively glowed next to the meager speech of Henry David Thoreau, a writer who is considered among the finest. Finally, there is the matter of product. Writing leads to closure and a final product that one can see, hold, and return to in detail as time passes. But talk is like the current of a stream—observable in passing, yet changing and constantly yielding to the subtle pressures of the immediate. It is both more abstract than writing in what it leaves behind and more concrete in what it addresses in the present. In short, while writing is an essential skill and has an important relationship to speech, it is oral language which is the precursor, facilitator, and more dominant and explicit force. It is probably the closest representation in human production to that abstraction we call "language."

Language is a two-pronged process whose attributes serve both to limit and expand our abilities to deal with reality. Consider the following:

1. Verbal language imposes structure on our experiences and, consequently, our view of reality. Joseph Church asserts, "It is our thesis that the individual discovers the characteristics of reality as he goes along, that there are predictable regularities in the sequence of discoveries, and that language, including both what other people tell him and what he tells himself, plays an intimate part in this discovery and in enabling him to perceive the world as a coherent, stable place in

which to live and act."[1] By reducing a collage of things, events and circumstances into a manageable lot, language enables us to deal with a reality which would otherwise dominate our existence. At the same time, it imposes an oversimplification on that reality and forces us to play, as one scholar asserted, "the role of phrenologist," breaking and parsing reality into pieces and bits only vaguely related to the original.

Yet the fact remains that our primary world of reality is a verbal one. Without words imagination cannot retain distinct objects and their relations. As the proverb goes: Out of sight, out of mind.

2. Verbal language permits us to deal with things and ideas across space and time without physically handling them. Most importantly in this regard, we can manipulate ideas and things in ways we could not handle physical objects. We can try out ideas and play with possibilities unlimited by empirical reality. For the growing child, this opportunity to test belief against the world, possibility against probability, and imagination against fact makes verbal language of supreme psychological importance for learning.

3. Verbal language allows us to carry experiences with us, relive them through articulation, reshape them, and bring them to bear in reshaping other experiences. This important dimension facilitates accommodation and assimilation in the cognitive development of the child. In addition, it enables us to preserve our rituals, arts, and sciences—our cultural and historical roots.

4. Verbal language enables us to provide attributes and qualities for our symbols. Describing and explaining the experience of identifying makes symbolization a part of our personal scheme of reality.

5. Verbal language forces us to abstract. Abstraction may be thought of in the sense of the concrete or tangible versus the intangible, e.g., "rock" vs. "hate." However, we can also consider movement across levels of abstraction. In the following diagram, each element is a subset of the element which follows it: Bessie → cow → livestock → farm animal → living thing → thing. Similarly, any term, phrase, assertion or idea can be thought of in relation to other sets of terms, phrases, assertions or ideas. Building schemes of relationships among such sets is especially crucial to the developing child.

A consideration of these characteristics should indicate that talk is fundamental to the elementary language arts curriculum. It enables students to discover where they are, how they got there, and where they are going.

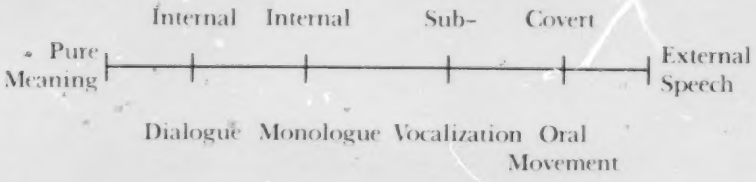
6

What Are Some Things We Do With Talk?

Anthropologists have noted the importance of verbal language, both oral and written, as expression of action or as mode of behavior. In primitive cultures this use has often surfaced in ritualistic chants and songs. Contemporary counterparts of the use of verbal language for noncommunicative purposes can be seen in actions as commonplace as the infant cooing in a crib or an adult singing in the shower. Certain kinds of stereotyped talk may also be considered in this category. The so-called "phatic" talk such as the mechanical "thank you" uttered by the checkout clerk at a department store or the "nice weather today" spoken by the next door neighbor are communication only in the broadest sense. Although worthwhile to note as a legitimate function of verbal language, this use is not as central to the language arts in the way the next two are. Arguments continue to surface regarding which comes first, language or thought, though most of these now seem to turn on semantics and definition of terms. There appears to be a general consensus that thought precedes language, but language development and cognitive development become inextricably intertwined very early in the child's development. One's verbal abilities continue to serve as essential indicators of intellectual growth through adulthood.

Internal Talk

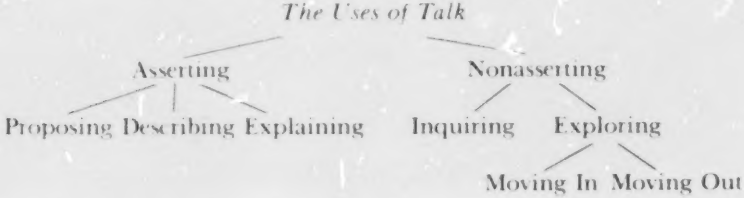
Do you know what the author meant when he suggested the following observation about Daniel Ellsberg going through his decision-making about revealing the Pentagon Papers? "He had to choose by himself—this law or my country, in a way, and *I think there was a terrific discussion inside himself over it.*"[4] Or are you aware of the languaging operations you utilize during silent reading? Do you recall the internal rehearsals you did prior to going onstage for a class play or before delivering a speech? Of course, these are all instances where internal talk or inner speech plays a fundamental role. The Russian psychologist Vygotsky studied this important area in depth some years ago, although more work has since been done by others. Vygotsky summarized the attributes of inner speech as: (1) the preponderance of the sense of a word over its meaning, (2) the merger of phrases into single words, and (3) the senses of words combining to produce meaning.[5] Inner speech functions as an important mediator between thought and external speech. Its mastery determines in large measure the higher levels of cognitive development and general verbal facility of the individual. We all utilize inner speech in advanced thinking operations and as a precursor to oral articulation. However, the more verbally facile among us apparently make greater conscious use of inner speech than do others. In considering the nature of the construct "inner speech," it is perhaps best to think of a continuum moving from a deeply embedded idea of "pure meaning" to a gradual movement toward the surfacing of external speech, i.e.,



where internal dialogue is a sort of self arguing with self; internal monologue, a sort of one-way directed rehearsal of a decided thesis; and subvocalization and covert oral movement, the beginnings of a surfacing external speech. Teaching the individual how to "play this inner speech continuum" is one of the basic purposes of the language arts program.

External Talk

Although external talk plays roles in two purposes of talk—as mode of action and as assist to thought and intellectual development—we must consider its most accessible role: mode of communication. It is here where most of our conscious effort is placed and where our relationships with others are shaped. In the design of a talk component of the curriculum, both *kinds* and *uses* of external talk are considered. The following chart depicts how talk is used:



There is, however, a fundamental point to keep in mind regarding the uses of talk. We are addressing talk intent and *not* the form per se of each utterance. Technically, an assertion is any statement verifiable as true or false. However, in this model, asserting talk is talk intent upon proposing a thesis, describing something, or explaining an idea or act, etc., rather than being a description of the structure of each statement uttered as part of the communication intent. Thus we may readily expect to find exhibited in asserting talk, uses of inquiring talk and other nonasserting kinds, e.g., questions, commands, etc. The same overlapping will obviously be noted in the other talk categories. Moving-in and moving-out talk will tend to reflect assertions as individual utterances. The patterns of discourse within the communication situation and the intent direction of the talk, however, are different than those in proposing an idea, justifying a position, etc. The categories of talk use intent identified here do tend to serve as generalized descriptors of the statement types which function within them, i.e., assertives tend to be used in proposing, describing, and explaining while more nonassertives tend to surface in inquiring talk. Throughout our later concerns in this book, though, we shall find that the communication purpose and talk intent addressed by each of these categories insures a wide utilization of individual utterance forms.

One kind of external talk is *asserting talk*. Technically, to assert is to propose an idea or ideas as being true. This translates into talking to

someone about something you know, have seen, or believe to be true. To assert is an important legitimate kind of talk and should not be perceived in a negative sense. To be assertive is to be confident rather than overbearing. Asserting talk is closure-directed talk designed to lead toward a conclusion, resolution, or logical sense of finish. Though some issues or questions may be left unanswered, its essential purpose is to bring some sense of closure to a particular idea, event, or issue. There are three essential types of asserting talk: proposing, describing and explaining.

There are three kinds of asserting talk. The first is *proposing talk*. This is the most demanding and rhetorically powerful of the assertive uses of talk. Its primary purpose is persuasion and its usual route is argumentation through the use of analogy and logic. In the schools, debate is its most usual formal outlet. But its central role is in less formal settings, and its techniques are employed by children of all ages. A case in point: My wife and I recently went to friends' house for dinner. We took along two small souvenirs of a recent trip west as gifts for the couple's two children, ages five and thirteen. My wife showed both to the five year old so that he might take his choice of the two gifts. After careful study and consideration, he opted for both! When my wife questioned the fairness of this move, he proceeded to lay out in fine rhetorical fashion a propositional argument of some length.

A second kind of asserting talk is *descriptive*. Although this mode of asserting is also designed to persuade, its nature is narrative rather than argumentative. Qualifying language use is more fundamental, with important roles for the conditional (if-then), disjunctive (either-or), and negative forms. The talker attempts to describe objective reality as neutrally as possible or, in other situations, interprets and proposes a reality from a personal point of view. Its usual contexts are formal presentation, small group discussions, and two-person dialogues.

The final type of asserting talk is *expository*. Expository talk requires more cognitive involvement than does describing talk, although the latter is usually a basic part of explanation. Description calls for a treatment of feature differences or attributes which distinguish things, events, or ideas from other parts of their environment. Expository talk calls for justification, a reason for knowing, and a probe of assumptive bases for that knowing.

A second major division of external talk is *non-asserting* talk, divided into inquiry and exploration. The most fundamental of the non-asserting talk is inquiring talk. Its purpose is to acquire information,

obtain an answer to a question, or find a resolution to a problem. In its problem-solving role, it uses a sophisticated chaining technique of questioning that moves toward a conclusion or generalization. Inquiring talk is used most often in two-person dialogues or small group discussions.

In contrast to inquiry, the other kind of non-asserting talk, *exploratory*, is talk in both oral and dramatic modes, designed to create new perceptions of or feelings about an idea or thing. For instructional purposes, it appears both legitimate and essential to consider improvisational dramatic expression, even where it is devoid of oral discourse, as being fundamentally a talk activity. It demands a carefully employed internal talk which elaborates movement in all its physical and story-developing detail. The less structure provided for dramatic expression, the more important the internal speech role. The avenues of movement for exploring talk are less tightly structured than the other talk uses, making this the apt domain of creative productions. *Moving-In* Exploring Talk takes as its beginning point a task or problem, however narrow or general in nature, and creatively "solves" it. It is improvisational language, oriented toward closure or resolution. Similar in character and form, *Moving-Out* Exploring Talk is less end- or product-oriented. Its purpose is mystery-generating rather than problem-solving. Its vitality is metaphoric—it uses figurative language, often in story form—and its results are open-ended and suggestive rather than closed and resolved.

These, then, are the three major uses of talk—to assert (propose, describe or explain) on one hand, and to inquire and to explore on the other. How we know what type to use, and when, are the next issues to be considered in the design of a talk model for the language arts classroom.

What Are Some Things That Impinge Upon Talk?

If talk operated in a vacuum, then our concerns about its production and role would be greatly simplified. Obviously, this is not the case. There are many factors in the talk situation that either facilitate or impede communication. It is a direct confrontation with these factors which shall occupy our concerns now. In fact, it is a confrontation metaphor which shall govern our direction in the talk activities which eventually follow; direct confrontation with the elements of language—the context and the communicator—whose interplay results in a given communication situation.

Factors of Circumstances

Circumstantial factors embrace *setting*, *subject*, *audience*, and *purpose*. Perhaps the most fundamental part of "setting" is who is doing the talking. An inner city black, a Chicano, a New Englander, a Mid-

westerner—indeed, anyone outside our own dialect framework will sound different to us. So also will a child with serious speech impediments or even slight language development delays or phonological impairments. In addition to the speech idiosyncracies which each of us brings to the setting, there exists a set of additional factors. Where is the talk taking place? How formal is the physical and emotional environment? Obviously, we don't talk the same way in the teachers' lounge that we do at dinner with a close friend or at the breakfast table. Youngsters will not use the same kinds of talk on the playground that they use in the class or at home. The occasion shapes in significant ways the nature of the talk used. Although we can neither account for nor identify all the kinds of talk occasions which occur in real life, we can generally identify some settings which call for different talk kinds.

One kind of setting we might call *ceremonial*. Although not as common as other settings, the ceremonial situation plays an important social and psychological role in our lives. It calls for particular kinds of oral discourse unlike that used in other settings. It is formal in tone and artificial in appearance. As a class of talk use settings, the ceremonial occasion is an example of language used as a mode of behavior, enabling us to relate to others in symbolic ways with meaning implicit more in the action than in the content. This "quasi-communication," in which the message is understood by all before the occasion occurs, is found in rituals of religious orders, legal proceedings, wedding ceremonies, and initiations of clubs and fraternities. For example, when the minister or priest at a wedding ceremony asks the couple if they will take each other as husband and wife, no other answer but "yes" is expected. Similarly, asking observers of the same ceremony if they have any objections to the impending union is "quasi-communication" in that its use is strictly ceremonial and not expected to engender a response. Since style is important to preserve the flavor of the ceremonial setting, the discourser utilizes complete sentences, virtually no ellipsis, and clear enunciation. In educational contexts, the most legitimate opportunities for ceremonial settings are role-playing activities, argumentations, and dramatics; the latter, in fact, is entirely a ceremonial operation.

A related kind of setting is *formal*. This is the setting for talk use most often employed for talks delivered before a generalized audience. Talk type is basically asserting-proposing and the tone is usually serious. The nature of the discourse reflects this seriousness. Seldom abbre-

viated, utterances are carefully designed to carry a heavy semantic load. The complement of a ceremonial setting, the formal setting demands carefully modulated language logically put together. It must be assumed that the message is important enough to warrant the preparation the speaker normally goes through prior to message delivery. Although talk interaction is possible, individual monologue or soliloquy is the usual order of things. Witness the 1976 presidential debates. It is important and interesting to place learners in formal settings in the language arts; ultimately, however, it is probably a setting more divorced from the day-to-day talk reality than are the next two settings.

We do most of our talking in *informal* settings. In them, we must employ a full range of all the talk uses: asserting, inquiring, exploring. Most of our daily conversations, small group discussions, and chance encounters with friends come in this kind of setting. We usually know our audience quite well, which allows us to be less concerned about both the form and the content of our talk. The classification of *informal* setting, however, should not lead us to infer that this is a less demanding setting to function in. More languaging skill is called into play in this setting than in any other. We cannot map out in detail the direction of the talk as we can in both ceremonial and formal settings. Instead, we must be prepared to make rapid shifts in semantic direction, constantly tuning in to the other's talk, physical gestures, and overall tone. We must be able to ply the full range of asserting and nonasserting talk uses, and make important decisions about how and when to make shifts in these uses. We must be skilled listeners, more so than in formal settings where the feedback demands are not as immediate or detailed in their character. As effective informal setting talkers, we must always be internally planning responses or rejoinders at the same time we are internalizing the talk of others. Such operations require utilization of internal talk along its entire continuum—from "pure" meaning, through internal dialogue, monologue, subvocalization, and covert oral movement, to external speech.

Finally, there is an *intimate* setting. This is the least public of the settings our talk operates in. It seldom encompasses more than two persons who are very close personally. Because of the close association, nonverbal as well as verbal cues serve important roles. Hence, the linguistic character of the talk can be and usually is sharply affected. Utterances tend to be chopped and brief, with verbal dialogue as eloquent in its absence as its presence. Consider, for example, the following excerpt from James Baldwin's *Blues for Mister Charlie*:

RICHARD: You want to dance?
JUANITA: No, not now.
RICHARD: You want something to eat?
JUANITA: No.
RICHARD: Yeah?
JUANITA: Were you *very* sick?
RICHARD: What d'ya want to know for?
JUANITA: Like that. Because I used to be your girlfriend . . .
RICHARD: You were more like a boy than a girl, though. I couldn't go nowhere without you. You were determined to get your neck broken.
JUANITA: Well, I've changed. I'm now much more like a girl than I am like a boy.
RICHARD: You didn't turn out too bad, considering what you had to start with.
JUANITA: Thank you. I guess.
RICHARD: How come you ain't married by now? Pete, now, he seems to be real fond of you.[6]

Notice the abbreviated sentences. Notice also the assertions or questions started but not completed, the assumptions taken, the deletions understood. It is important to remember that this setting is more private than the others but not necessarily less important or, for that matter, less commonly employed. It is simply that the occasion is often nonpublic. Hence, its role in a school setting is relegated to very specific and limited situations, as in teacher-student talks on personal matters, or in role-playing or dramatic activities.

A second major factor of circumstance is the *subject*. Ironically, one of the most important factors which impinge upon talk—the subject—is the factor we can say the least about. Its character and role are more formally conditioned by other attending factors, i.e., setting, audience, and purpose. It is true that in many formal settings our choice of subject or topic dictates what audience will attend. However, in informal, ceremonial and intimate settings the subject is dictated by the other factors of audience and purpose. The most obvious point to be considered about subject is the experience and interest brought to the situation by both speaker and audience. This is a factor for the language arts teacher to bear in mind when designing oral language activities. Attention must be paid to where the child is developmentally and what kinds of personal experiences the child brings to the language arts class.

The *audience* is a third factor which impinges on the talk situation.

Regardless of setting or subject, the verbal message is directed *at someone*. In the case of inner speech, the someone is Self. In considering different senses of audience, the Me-as-Audience notion is important for self-directed inner talk. In addition, we can think of the Personal You-as-Audience where the individual or individuals are known by us. In informal and intimate settings, we are more often than not involved with this sense of audience. Finally, there is the general or Unknown You-as-Audience where we may know something of the general character of this audience but little else. For example, in formal settings, whether we are speaking on subjects relatively broad in interest range or for a specific purpose dictates the kind of audience who will attend to our remarks. In the case of ceremonial settings, our knowledge about the nature of the audience is even less important, since it is the process of the talk itself which is most fundamental.

For many reasons it is useful to view these senses of audience—Me, Personal You, and Unknown You—as being somewhat removed from each other. The audience moves from the inner person (Me) to an unknown quantity which may be literally miles away, or, more often, one the talker knows few specifics about. As psychological distance increases, the more dependent the speaker becomes upon the linguistic and semantic character of the message itself, and the less can be assumed about the reception of the message. Hence, language shortcuts such as ellipsis and body gestures are not good techniques of communication here. These notions of audience have impact for all of us, but in the developing elementary school child, audience and the concept of psychological distancing present unique limitations and opportunities which must be addressed in a talk curriculum model. Developmental psychologists (Piaget, Werner, Kaplan, et al) point out how the ability to perceive the role of talk as a means of addressing a reality outside of one's immediate concrete experience is an important step in the child's development. Werner and Kaplan (1967) note, "The progress towards the autonomy of linguistic mediation—involving an increasing distance and independence of language from the domain of concrete, perceptual-motor experiences—reflects itself in several ways: increasing reference to phenomena remote from concrete perception, formation of nouns to refer to class concepts rather than to individual concepts, formation of designators of abstract rather than context-bound relations."[7]

In other words, we can anticipate that the further the psychological distance, the more demanding is the communication situation; a greater demand for more complex and explicit language—use of qualification,

identification, concept-describing language—and the greater the demand for the speaker to move away from the Self as an audience. The ability to deal with the Unknown or Generalized You-as-Audience will be limited in the younger child. Curriculum design in talk should reflect this limited expectation, both in the design and selection of activities and in teacher expectation of child performance.

The last of the four factors of circumstance—setting, subject, audience, and purpose—is *purpose*. We have touched somewhat on this factor in the earlier consideration of the talk uses of asserting, inquiring, and exploring; and indeed there are important ties between purpose and talk uses. For instance, consider the following talk purposes: informing, explaining, describing, asking or inquiring, directing or commanding, enjoying, and persuading. Talk to inform, describe, explain, persuade, direct or command is obviously served most often by asserting language; talk to ask utilizes inquiring language to a greater extent; and talk to enjoy uses exploring language and often the dramatic mode. Purpose determines talk kind and not vice versa, unless the speaker has lost control or direction of purpose.

In considering the interrelationships between the factors of circumstance and the kinds of talk we use, we have yet to explore the nature of the individual. Some important characteristics of the communication factor interrelationships are summarized in the charts which follow.

Factor of Circumstance: Ceremonial Setting

Language Use:	largely asserting language; words and utterances reflect low semantic density;* process of the delivery is more important than the semantics of words or sentences
Purpose:	mode of action; ritualistic; *not* meant to arouse to action or judgment but to provide for a personal or social communion
Audience:	Unknown You
Subject:	religious, legal, social rituals (marriage, fraternity; initiation, etc.)
Examples:	trials, wedding vows, religious services, selected soliloquies in dramatic performances

*Semantic density refers to the amount of meaning that components (words and sentences) of the message carry.

Factor of Circumstance: Formal Setting

Language Use:	largely asserting language; words and utterances carry high semantic density; linguistic text is full with little deletion; contractions are often avoided
Purpose:	to inform; to describe; to explain; to arouse to action or judgment
Audience:	Unknown You or Personal You
Subject:	varied; can be esoteric but not necessarily; current events and issues are often the focus
Examples:	formal speech, debate, report

Factor of Circumstance: Informal Setting

Language Use:	asserting, inquiring and exploring uses; linguistic text is often abbreviated; deletion and contraction are common; vocabulary is utilized on familiar terms
Purpose:	to inform; to ask; to explain; to describe; to persuade
Audience:	Personal You
Subject:	varied; tends to be specific and related to the talker's personal experiences
Examples:	two-person dialogue, small group discussion

Factor of Circumstance: Intimate Setting

Language Use:	full range—asserting, inquiring, exploring—though the latter category is most apt; many abbreviated stops, false starts; deletion is common; physical gestures and expressions are most important; vocabulary is familiar
Purpose:	full range
Audience:	Personal You
Subject:	highly personal; often self-directed
Examples:	two-person dialogue; talk of close friends, immediate family

Factors of Human Condition

As significant as the circumstantial factors are, the most important of all considerations in the talk situation is what the talker brings to it, the infinity of abilities, hopes, and dreams that drive one's life in whatever direction. In the language arts classroom, we are specifically concerned with those things which shape the languaging ability of the child: what the child brings to us, how the child got it, and what the child might become. In the case of language, there is the long-raging battle of language acquisition and development theories. What does current research tell us? This can be troublesome, for it is in this domain where there is now more study and speculation than in any other area of language arts study. With Noam Chomsky's theory of generative transformational grammar serving as a model, most current studies of child language reflect a particular learning theory bias, namely, that the root structures of language production are innate and that behaviorist theories of learning do not aptly describe this phenomenon. In considering research in any domain of learning, the limitations and strengths of the basic theory underlying the research must be borne in mind to assure a reasonable perspective on the findings of that research. In the case of language development, this may have specific implications for the prospective teacher's decision-making regarding practical things such as correcting usage and techniques for teaching grammar, writing, and talking. Teachers have a professional responsibility to be aware of the research in this area.

Perhaps the most fundamental of the important findings elaborated by developmental psycholinguists (those concerned with the study of language acquisition and development in children) is that language is acquired and develops in the child in a relatively stable and orderly set of stages.[8] Not only is it inappropriate to judge the language of the developing child by that employed by an adult, but it must be recognized that the child proceeds through more than one grammar or, in other language, proceeds through a series of stages in a grammar. Research suggests that the stages apply regardless of intelligence or learning environment. These factors apparently only affect the relative speed at which the child proceeds through a given stage. McNeill (1966), for instance, describes utilization of double negatives by noting a sequence of sentence types typical of three different stages of development:

a. I don't want no supper.
b. I don't want some supper.
c. I don't want any supper.

He gives an account of an attempt to correct a young child in the first stage above:

> Child: Nobody don't like me.
> Parent: No, say "nobody likes me."
> Child: Nobody don't like me.
> (This dialogue is repeated several times.)
> Parent: No. Now listen carefully; say "nobody likes me."
> Child: Oh! Nobody don't likes me![9]

The notion of language development via stages bears rather sharply on the appropriateness of correcting children's language. Research in this area is discouraging for those who support verbal corrections of speech. After a series of studies with first, second, and third graders, Gleason (1967) concluded: "In listening to us, the children attended to the sense of what we said and not the form. And the plurals and past tenses they offered were products of their own linguistic systems, and not imitations of us."[10] And Brown and colleagues (1969), after studying the influence of approval and disapproval by parents of their children's talk, concluded,

> there is not a shred of evidence that approval and disapproval are contingent on syntactic correctness . . . . When Eve expressed the opinion that her mother was a girl by saying, "He a girl," her mother answered, "that's right." The child's utterance was ungrammatical, but her mother did not respond to the fact; instead, she responded to the truth of the proposition the child intended to express. In general, the parents fitted propositions to the child's utterance, however incomplete or distorted the utterances, and then approved or not according to the correspondence between proposition and reality. Thus, "Her curl my hair," was approved because the mother was, in fact, curling Eve's hair. However, Sarah's grammatically impeccable "There's the animal farmhouse" was disapproved because the building was a lighthouse, and Adam's "Walt Disney comes on on Tuesday" was disapproved because Walt Disney came on on some other day.[11]

In other words, parents tend to address the propositional intent of the utterance rather than its structural form. Other data reviewed by Cazden conclude "evidence on the role of correction in the child's learning of syntax is wholly negative." Cazden states further, "the implication for education is that teachers may be interfering with the child's learning process by insisting on responses that superficially look or sound correct."[12] In short, a developmental perspective on the talk of children

suggests that the elementary teacher should accept what the child brings to the school setting, consider past experiences and the linguistic and cognitive attributes of the child's general age group, and then consider strategies for dealing with what might be languaging or thinking problems. This has been made a difficult job by a recent proliferation of statements such as, "the child comes to school in command of all the important sentence structures he will need" or "the mastery of most basic grammatical fundamentals has occurred for many children by the time they are four years old."[13] Such notions are now being seriously reexamined in the light of new research which suggests that extremely important syntactic and propositional skills are not mastered until much later (10 years and beyond). Such skills cannot be assumed to be within the operational grasps of primary-grade youngsters. The language arts teacher must be particularly attuned to where the child should be by current definitions of what constitutes a particular developmental stage. There is no more sensitive matter than the language the child brings to the classroom. The teacher's response to a child's language is a response to that child's fundamental personhood, and so vitally affects the child's self-concept. We can most conveniently discuss the factors of the human condition in terms of grade levels.

The most productive growth years in language acquisition and development are between ages two and four. During this period, the child usually masters the base structure rules of kernel sentences. By age three, for instance, the child has established subject-predicate relationships and operates with the larger fundamental grammatical categories like noun and verb.[14] The child increasingly comes to recognize the real and potential use of language as a referential tool. Early on, topic is asserted, often one word and modifier to qualify the intent of that topic, as in the utterance, "Mama, hot." Debate still continues, however, as to whether early single-word utterances are in fact "holophrasic" speech, where the child is asserting a proposition or positing an inquiry although structural elements are not explicit.[15] Nonetheless, by the late preschool and early primary school years, propositional intent is pretty clear. Also in this stage, noun plurals and possessive inflections are mastered. The verb system, however, is quite complex, and verb inflections will continue to present challenges throughout and beyond the crucial formative years. Instances of grammatical rule violations continuing through this period are (a) plurals extended to pronouns, for example, "somes"; (b) process-status distinctions in verbs, as in "I seeing Fraser"; (c) overgeneralization of *ed* inflection to irregular verbs,

e.g. "I hurted my knee"; and (d) confusion of intransitive and transitive verbs, for instance, "I don't wanna fall him," the latter a relatively minimal occurrence.[16] During this period, the child develops skills in certain transformational operations such as addition, deletion, substitution, and permutation. Early transformational operations, however, usually do not disturb the underlying sentence. During the nursery school period, most transformations are via "add on," for example:

"I know what is that."
(that) (what)
"I got everything what you got."
(that)
"I see a dog what's white."
(that's)

Children under five years of age do not follow many "selectional restriction rules"—the grammar rules which prevent us from using, for instance, two determiners in a row, e.g., "the a boy," or from using an animate verb with an inanimate noun, e.g., "the sun skips." (Of course, poets constantly violate selectional restriction rules, but their violations are intentional.) However, the essentials for efficient communication are present by the beginning of the fifth year.

The beginning school years (Grades 1–3) are significant in terms of the language arts for a number of reasons. The child is in a language development period where the syntactic structures become more fully developed and the semantic range of language increases. In addition, it is during this time when the child, in Piaget's terms, moves from the cognitive stage of preoperational thought to concrete operations, a matter which bears sharply on languaging. In spite of these general characteristics, however, a wide range of abilities with the language will already be present in the beginning school years. Extent of vocabulary, for instance, can vary by thousands of words among individual children in the first grade. Also, research methods of measurement vary considerably, so best estimates of early vocabulary knowledge differ from researcher to researcher. Dale (1965) estimates, "If we assume that children finish the first grade with an average vocabulary of 3,000 words, it is likely that they will add about 1,000 words a year from then on. The average high school senior will know about 14,000 to 15,000 words, the college senior 18,000 to 20,000."[17] Other projections suggest that the comprehension vocabulary of first graders is even higher. In one of the few significant longitudinal studies of the language of elementary

school children, Loban (1963) noted that even at the kindergarten level subjects proficient in language have a median score of 67 on a vocabulary test of 100 items, and the score range dips to a low of 35.[18] Similar studies suggest considerable variety in the length of sentences uttered by early school age children and in the amount of structural complexity in their sentences, and considerable difference in their ability to use the language for different semantic and communication purposes.[19]

Despite these qualifications, it is still possible to generalize certain important observations about the talk language of children in this age range. By the age of seven or so most children have mastered the following base structure language production rules as described by Menyuk (1969):

Base Structure Rules of Children Three to Seven Years

Sentence → Noun phrase + verb phrase + transformational element

Noun phrase → Determiner + noun + number + person

Determiner → Article, adjective, quantifier, demonstrative

Noun → Common, human, animate

Number → Singular, plural, mass

Verb phrase → Auxiliary + verb phrase

Auxiliary → Auxiliary_1 + Auxiliary_2

Auxiliary_1 → Tense + modal

Tense → Present, past

Modal → Can, may, will

Auxiliary_2 → (be + present participle)

Verb phrase → Main verb + (noun phrase) (predicate)

Main verb →	"be" in context of predicate Verb transitive in context of noun phrase Verb intransitive in context 0 or adverb
Verb transitive →	(Verb transitive complement) (Verb transitive particle)
Adverb →	Adverb of location, time, manner
Adverb of location →	(Adverb of location) (Prepositional phrase of location)
Prepositional phrase of location →	Preposition + noun phrase[20]

Such a set of rules suggests that role and category of parts of speech are well-ordered by the age of seven. The semantic features of noun class are utilized, and little violation of selectional constraints remains in utterances. Basic inflectional systems are in order, and both transitive and intransitive verbs can be expected. The subtleties of "to be" verbs remain as rather gross category problems, since the verb form differences between black and white English preclude a single model for all children. Teachers observe that children's talk at this age range (7 years and up) has structural complexity. According to the above separate studies by Loban and Menyuk, it is what is done *within* the sentence to achieve elegance and flexibility that is the real measure of language effectiveness. Menyuk also agrees with teacher observations that it is structure rather than length which determines the complexity of an utterance.

For instance, "Joe's chasing the old cat was funny" or "For Mary to lie to mother was not nice" are both more complex than "The nice little old dog in the corner of the old red barn ate a dirty bone." Of course, syntactic fluency is only one factor in the total effectiveness of the talker.

The sound system of the language is largely mastered by the beginning of school. According to Ervin and Miller, "By the fourth year, the child's phonological system closely approximates the mode (reference to normal language production), and the remaining deviations are usually corrected by the time the child enters school."[21] Templin (1957) and others have shown that isolated and subtle phonological distinctions

come later, or, for some, never.[22] Factors of dialect can enter into teacher judgment here. We all share the unfortunate tendency of evaluating the utterances of others by the sound of our own. This can cause particular problems in teacher approaches to both beginning reading instruction and talk instruction. Basically, however, it is safe to assume that, for most children, talking, writing, or reading problems in initial language arts instruction are not related to problems in sound production. In the early grades, meaning continues to be bound up in the word order of utterances more significantly than at later years. Earlier, active voice sentences appear more often than passive ones. Sentence building in the talk of early grade level children continues to be primarily an "add-on" operation, using the conjunction "and" to tack one utterance on to another. Relative pronouns such as "that" are used in much the same fashion. "Because" is typically used in a conjunctive sense rather than a causal sense.[23] Many six and seven year olds continue to utter and comprehend utterances only where temporal order and grammatical order correspond,[24] e.g., "After you feed the dog, you may play" is preferred to "You may play after you feed the dog." Ability to move smoothly when the logical order of utterances is shifted comes only in later years. Around the age of seven, talk (inner speech) utilization becomes a part of the talk facility.[25] Considering the important role of inner speech in both talking and writing, this is a fundamental point. It is largely internal talk which provides us with the means to introspect, to "think about our own thinking." Indeed, internal discussions of self with self are such a part of the adult languaging model that it is difficult for us to perceive thinking and talking without them, yet kindergarteners and most first graders apparently have to do just that. At this time also there is a significant reduction in the amount of what Piaget calls "egocentric talk." Vygotsky (1962) contends that this subsurfaces to become inner speech. Such egocentric talk, that is, external talk done both alone and in the company of others, functions primarily for a self audience. Perhaps it serves as a way for the child to search out sounding boards for cognitive and language development. For example, we have all noted kindergarten age children playing with toy cars and trucks. Their language might go something like this:

JOEY: My truck is big and is going up the hill.
MARY: My car is here.
JOEY: And my truck has big rocks in it.
MARY: My car is red and goes fast.

It is as if the two were soliloquizing in total independence, neither tuning in to the message of the other, but neither particularly concerned that there was no verbal feedback in response to the propositions uttered, as if to suggest that the language externalization and exchange were enough. This egocentric talk, according to Piaget, can constitute up to nearly 50 percent of the talk of children even into the first grade,[26] although this percentage is considered by many developmentalists to be too high.

Talk of early grade level children tends to be syncretistic—that is, it seems to link idea to idea without regard to an adult sort of logic. All things can be connected in virtually any way. It implies a sort of logic by mere association, an *argumentum post hoc, ergo propter hoc*—after this, therefore, because of this. Piaget refers to the thinking of the child at this age as being "transductive," that is, neither inductive nor deductive.[27] A logical use of "because" does not appear until much later. "If-then" assertions, the crux of inferential language, do not appear until about 11 or 12 years of age.[28] Also according to Piaget, the talk of the child through age seven or eight can be expected to reflect beliefs in animism—air is alive and conscious, the sun and moon accompany us on walks, most things have internal powers, everything has been made for people, clouds start moving by themselves, the sun comes from clouds.[29] In fact, many of the attributes of sentence structure that children "violate" through seven to eight years of age, like the rule that animate verb requires animate noun, are, in terms of the child's cognitive world, reasonable uses of language. In the later primary grades, third and into fourth grades, the metaphoric quality of the youngster's talk is only present as intentional metaphor, and thus infrequent. The language of logic begins to appear, but talk reflecting anything like hypothetical reasoning will not appear until 11 or 12 years of age.

It is in grades four through eight when most of the talk facility of the speaker is fleshed out. The individual is capable of applying the more sophisticated syntactic operations, although this is not necessarily done in either talking or writing (more significant syntactic and semantic differences begin to surface here between the two fundamental language production models). Intermediate-level youngsters continue to reflect syncretism in their language use—that is, they seldom attempt explanation via paraphrase. Piaget points out how a child younger than 11 or 12, given a number of easy proverbs and a number of corresponding sentences jumbled together but each meaning the same thing as one of

the given proverbs, has difficulty making the correct connection. For example, a child of nine assimilates the proverb "White dust will ne'er come out of a sack of coal" to the sentence, "people who waste their time neglect their business." Both "coal" and "black" can be cleaned, so these are the same according to the child.[30] Even fourth graders prefer to think that certain topics or ideas cannot be restated in a syntactically different fashion without affecting the logical content of the message. "If the day is nice, we'll have a picnic" and "Either it isn't a nice day or we'll have a picnic" are logically equivalent. They say the same thing. Yet most fourth graders will prefer to reason that alteration of the syntactic character of an utterance necessarily alters its meaning as well.[31]

In terms of language structure, the most specific features of growth in fourth through eighth grade are in the use of nominalization and relative clauses. For example, ability to use constructs such as factive nominals increases, i.e., "I know that Joe's leaving will hurt us." Also, the relative clause plays an increasingly important and more elegant role in language use, i.e., "He's the one that left the old glove in the box." "I know who wants to be on my side." John Mellon summarizes key points from Hunt's research: "Hunt's findings show that intra-T-unit coordinate conjunction, comparative conjunction and adverbial clauses do not fluctuate with age .... But in general, it is the nominal and relative transforms whose consistently greater frequencies per T-unit characterize growth of syntactic fluency."[32] It is in the noun forms that opportunities abound for description, quantification, and qualification. It is in the relative clause ("that," "who" and "which" clauses) where specification, elaboration and limitation occur. The net result semantically is that the ability to ply a reasonably full abstraction range and discourse in some depth is developed when children are eleven or twelve years old. In addition, it is during this period that most youngsters can formally reason, reflecting in their talk hypothetical thinking and skills in deductive and inductive inference. Expressions such as "if-then" conditionals, utterances with "because" in both cause-effect and reason-for-knowing senses, i.e., "He is a doctor because he wants to help sick people" (cause-effect), "He is a doctor because I saw him in the hospital checking sick people" (reason-for-knowing), and contrariwise subordinating conjunctions, e.g., "although," "in spite of the fact that," etc., all play more significant and sustained roles in specialized talk situations. Indeed, Loban (1963) notes,

> The analysis of linguistic function in this research does reveal one fact of considerable import. Those subjects who proved to have the greatest power over language—by every measure that could be applied—were the *subjects who most frequently used language to express tentativeness*. Supposition, hypothesis, and conditional statements occur much less frequently in the language of subjects lacking skill in language.[33]

Other research has suggested that use of this kind of language is not a predominant part of many talkers' linguistic repertoire. Yet facility with hypothetical–suppositional talk is instrumental for effective and convincing communication.

By the eighth grade or so, the teacher should be able to anticipate that the youngster has a reasonably full range of talk language potential. The child should be able to utilize oral discourse in such a way that only the more refined matters of rhetorical choice, syntactic nuance, and dramatic or logical design remain to be developed. This assumes that certain important matters have been consistently attended to in the earlier elementary language arts years.

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Part Two

THE WAY I SEE IT, TALKING IS JUST PUTTING A BUNCH OF SOUNDS TOGETHER.
BLUGBLE GUMPY KIKAK WUNADOO BEE!
THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE, TRIXIE.
THEY SAY!

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A Talk Model For The Language Arts Classroom

We have discussed the theory of talk; now let us explore the practical use of that theory in the classroom. Making decisions about materials, techniques, activities, and teaching strategies to implement an effective talk component of the language arts is a major challenge facing the elementary teacher. It is especially challenging for talk, since skill development in talk is not necessarily going to be conspicuous in test scores of the type used in most schools, reading performance, etc. Where skill in talk contributes to those scores, its role will be implicit rather than explicit. In addition, talk is often used as a means to assess student mastery of certain concepts in other academic areas rather than as a skill in its own right. Many of the activities which utilize talk appear, at least to outsiders and perhaps to many teachers, as sort of serendipitous operations, chosen by chance for reasons at best geared to providing variety in teaching technique. This need not be the case. Indeed, ignoring the development of talk as a skill is an especially undesirable way for a language arts teacher to operate. Oral language ability is too

important to the child to be left to chance or to depend upon an arbitrary feeling about its utilization. Instead, it must be viewed as the most important domain of the language arts and should be rooted to an underlying structure which can assure that the components of an oral language program reflect cohesiveness, clarity, and sequence. To establish a structurally sound language arts program, the teacher must be able to do a number of things:

1. Formulate and articulate a rationale for the talk component of the program. Questions to ask are, "Why is oral language skill important for the individual? What kinds of purposes are served by such skill?" "What are reasonable goals and objectives?" Articulating a rationale should help to clarify some issues for the teacher as well as for parents, administrators, and colleagues.

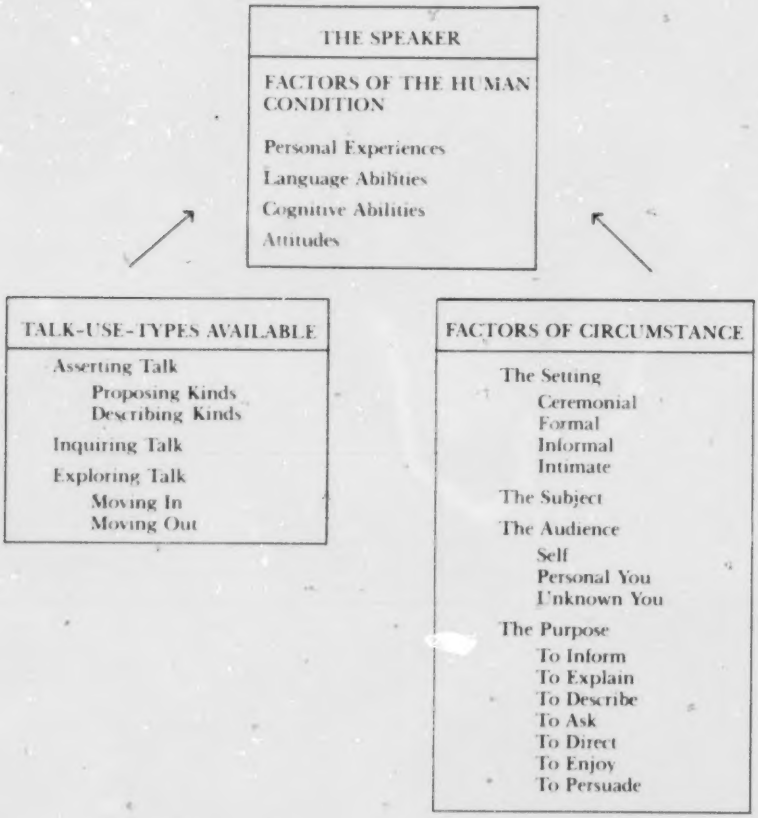
2. Develop and articulate a program which allows one to bring about a logical fit of activities, materials, teaching strategies with the rationale, goals, and objectives.

3. Design and implement teaching strategies, techniques, materials, and activities which will move toward the goals and objectives of the program. For example, how does one design talk activities; small group, two-person dialogue, formal speeches, dramatic modes? What kinds of materials are needed to achieve program goals and objectives? How does one relate certain acitivites to others? Are there "logical" orders to follow?

4. Evaluate learner performance and effectiveness of the teaching approach. What represents reasonable performance in various activities for students of different ages? To what extent is program purpose and direction in line with developmental stage of the learner?

The most fundamental task in developing a talk curriculum is pulling together the various factors which impinge upon a given communication situation. Before we can take steps toward meeting the demands placed on language arts teachers which are outlined here, we must see how these factors mesh. We need a framework which describes the components of the oral language skill development program. At least three sets of factors need to be considered here: the factors of human condition which the individual brings to a context; the factors of circumstance which impinge upon the talker; and the talk-use kinds which are available to the speaker. These factors may be viewed graphically in the following chart.

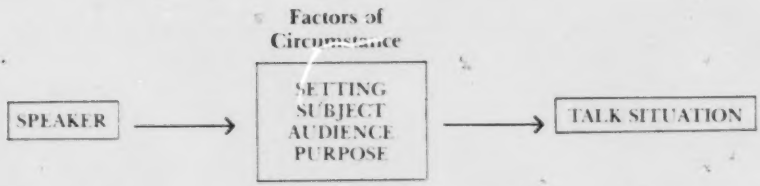
The Communication Situation



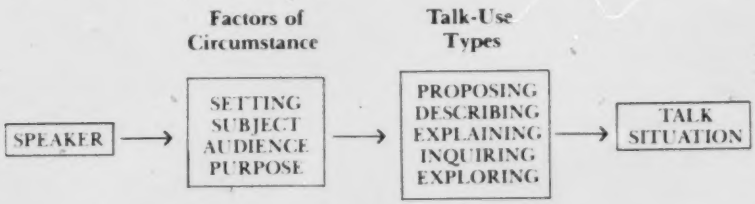
The ultimate goal of the language arts teacher for the talk curriculum component is to convert this communication situation systematically into one where the talker is increasingly in control. The talker carefully assesses the situation:

SPEAKER → TALK SITUATION

considers the factors of circumstance implicit in the situation:



and employs talk, where possible, in tune with the situation and possible factors of circumstance:



We must remember in considering such a model that these factors are basically fixed, but in different degrees. For example, factors of circumstance (setting, subject, audience, purpose) are imposed upon the talker. The ability to deal with them depends upon the ability to see their character, how and where they shape the communication situation, and how the talker may capitalize upon their nature rather than be hindered by their limitations. Talk-use types, while they impose limitations, also offer more options to the talker so that talk-use kinds can fit the factors of circumstance. Finally, the factors of the human condition both limit and expand the potential of the communication situation. The personal experiences, language and cognitive abilities, attitudes and beliefs that the individual brings to the situation bear most sharply on all of the other factors. But, unlike the factors of circumstance and talk uses, the human being is less bound by time. The developing child, especially, moves across the stage where communication is front and center so that it may be dealt with in more subtle and sophisticated fashion throughout the developing years. Early egocentrism and a relatively slowly evolving sense of decontextualization or psychological distancing, for instance, suggest that the child's ability to deal with the range of audience senses (Self, Personal You, Unknown You) will change perceptibly through the years. In the early grades, talk activities that are oriented toward Self and Personal You audiences will prove more workable for the child. This does not mean that activities

designed to utilize Unknown audience cannot, or even should not be used. It does mean, however, that teacher expectation should be attuned to the developmental attributes of the child in order to avoid feelings of frustration and failure in the child. Oral language activities of all types and at all grade levels should be viewed by the teacher as opportunities to rehearse the known, facilitate development of the new, and suggest a tacit probing for future skills. Activities designed only to rehearse the known become boring and soon die. Those constantly requiring too much mental activity become frustrating and threatening. It is here where a moderate, cautious approach to teaching is to be admired.

First and foremost, then, the teacher's role in the talk curriculum component is one of facilitator—"tone-setter." The atmosphere of the learning environment is central to every kind of learning experience in the school, but nowhere are its results more conspicuous than in a talk situation. It is here where the whole world can see whether a child is willing to get into important learning experiences and be exposed via talk, or whether the decision is to remain silent. Silence has a deadening impact not only upon the child but also upon those as unknown audience who might ultimately have benefited from the child's talents and abilities. Secondly, the teacher is structurer. This means giving careful consideration to activity types and categories which will allow for a developmental growth in the widest range of factors of circumstance and talk-use types which the classroom context and the abilities of the child allow. For any given talk activity type X, the teacher must consider its potential in terms of the child, and the range and/or depth of possible situations involving setting types, audience types, purposes, subjects, and talk-use types. Before using any talk activity, the teacher should be able to answer the following questions:

(1) What is the setting range—ceremonial, informal, formal, intimate?

(2) What is the audience range—self, personal you, unknown you?

(3) What is the subject range—concrete, abstract, personal, etc.?

(4) What is the purpose range—to inform, to describe, to explain, to entertain, to direct, to persuade?

(5) What range and/or depth of talk-use type interplay is there—proposing, inquiring, exploring, describing?

(6) What does it require of the child's cognitive abilities—hypothetical reasoning, classifying, intensive inner speech?

(7) What does it require of the child's language abilities—structurally complex sentences, if–then assertions, metaphoric expressions, extensive use of negation, relations of grammatical and temporal order?

(8) What does it assume about the child's personal experiences—wealthy, poor, rural, urban, etc.?

(9) Where does this activity stand in relation to activities Y and Z—in relation to the total talk curriculum picture?

In other words, every decision about a talk activity or teaching strategy must undergo careful teacher scrutiny to assure a logical fit of practice with theory that can produce a well-articulated talk curriculum.

Designing a Talk Environment

It should be clear to us by now that one of the more unfortunate ironies that the language arts teacher must face is that the school setting itself freezes the circumstance factor of setting into a specific physical and emotional context and limits in many ways the senses of audience available to the speaker—especially Self-as-Audience—and virtually eliminates the intimate setting which is an important personal one. The school is not a microcosm of society, except in the grossest possible sense. Much of the oral language in the school is, at best, limited in scope and range of the factors of circumstance and, at worst, artificially contrived. These physical and social conditions offer possibly the greatest challenge to the language arts teacher. The teacher must see to it that, at least metaphorically, the classroom is transformed into different settings with different audiences, and with different genuine subjects and purposes available and desirable for potential talkers. This is perhaps the most demanding of the teacher's creative jobs. As a matter of fact, if the teacher can accomplish this task, a great deal of the effort to motivate will be unnecessary, for the environment itself will stimulate.

While looking at the particular talk activities discussed in this section, the teacher may want to keep the following points in mind.

(1) Regardless of talk mode, student-generated activities will usually be more productive than teacher-generated ones. Interest and commitment are typically greater.

(2) Follow-up talk, writing and reading activities can often be more valuable learning experiences than the initiator activity. Don't allow the talk direction to die too soon.

(3) The factors of circumstance impinge in different ways on different contexts. The result for youngsters is increased or decreased effectiveness depending upon the child's development, the interest brought to the task, and the intent of the talk task to begin with.

(4) Talk in any mode is a fundamental part of the individual. Critiquing talk is not the same as critiquing performance on a social studies or math test. Positive support for a well-done talk exercise is more likely to engender confidence and increased talk skill than correcting the poorly-done exercise.

(5) The central purpose of talk activities is experience and learning. Performance per se is secondary. In other words, talk activities discussed here are essentially learning tools rather than entertainment.

A consideration of the talk use types and the factors of circumstance in conjunction with the normal constraints of time, space and the physical context of the school suggest the following areas to acquaint students with a talk part of the language arts curriculum.

Formal Talk

Talk in a formal context is that which is most commonly thought of when considering public speaking. In the school situation, its usual outlet is the expository presentation or report before the entire class. Recently played down as a talk activity in the elementary grades, formal talk has an important role in the intermediate and middle school grades. It represents an opportunity to address a Generalized audience (the closest to an Unknown audience the elementary child is likely to address) in a rather formal setting. These two communication factors call for more detailed elaboration of idea or subject, more quantification and qualification, and more attention to level of abstraction, since audience background is not known in detail. Preparation for a formal talk requires the presentor to construct logically and elaborate more fully. Audience feedback is subtle and not likely to assist

elementary youngsters much in modifying their talk. Again, we should remember that our purpose for utilizing this form of talk is not so much for providing practice in this art for the child because most children will never use this form in communication situations outside the classroom. The importance of formal talk rests in its role as a learning tool. It is more structured than the other talk modes–the dramatic, dialogue, and small group discussion modes—and it enables the child to have necessary experiences in designing and implementing a talk plan from beginning to end with very little talk mediation in between. The teacher has an opportunity in this mode to bring the various factors of circumstance to bear by defining the context, subject, etc. However, as in all talk activities, the most successful enterprises will be those where the youngster has had some significant input and has a vested interest in the outcome.

Although reports of various kinds offer logical topics to address in the formal talk situation, the teacher should remember the potential of this form of talk for fulfilling a wide variety of talk purposes. For example, the teacher may want to use formal talk as a means of teaching students how to

(1) inform. Possible topics are: tell us about the new store in town; how to get to your house; tell us about your new pet.

(2) describe. Possible topics are: what your room at home looks like; what your dog looks like; what your bicycle looks like.

(3) explain. Possible topics are: how to build a model car; how to repair a broken toy.

(4) persuade. Possible topics are: why we should have a shorter school day; why children should have pets; why we should go to the farm for a class trip.

Follow-up discussion can move into small groups and or dialogue if the subject generates enough interest.

Dialogue

Dialogue! In some senses, this is what all talk boils down to; being eyeball-to-eyeball with another person and sharing part of oneself through talk. The wonders of technology, with attendant machines and intricate multisensory appeals, are obviously valuable assists but it is oral discourse which remains fundamental to the teaching process.

Partly due to the immediacy of feedback, mostly due to the human interaction at close range with total attention devoted to another, dialogue is the teacher's most powerful tool. For the student, too, immediacy of feedback and human closeness are central to dialogue. The complex internal mechanisms of inner speech open doors to discovery about oneself and about others, something simply not possible in other situations. In terms of the various impinging factors we have discussed, one-to-one external talk, or dialogue, tends to operate within tighter constraints. The setting is either Informal or Intimate, the audience Personal-You. Subjects tend to be more immediately personal. However, talk-use types are often subtly intertwined—proposing, describing, inquiring. Exploring talk more often functions when the second party is of such a relationship as to command an intimate setting. Although experienced in the dramatic mode and central to it, dialogue changes outside the dramatic context. You will recall that, in many senses, the entire dramatic mode is ceremonial, and the chance to move into and out of experimental contexts is available to the participants. That is not true of most other types of dialogue in the school setting. You are "laying out" yourself in situations which are not typically hypothetical but "as is." The results are more immediacy to the learning and greater impact upon the learner. Opportunities to establish important relationships with children can be fostered more appropriately in dialogue settings than in any other.

Here are three kinds of dialogue settings which develop inferences as to *what*, *how*, and *why*, respectively.

1. Allow one child to experience a specific sense experience, e.g., the smell of a freshly-cut apple. Present another child with three or four olfactory cues, e.g., the apple, an orange, a turnip, a potato. The first child should then describe the experience in such a way that the second child can choose the correct odor. You will need to restrict the language available to use for clues. For example, you will need to eliminate words such as "peeling" from the fruit comparisons. The task can be varied in complexity by adding to or taking from the words which children are allowed to us. Consider other similar tasks:

TASTE: soda, lemonade, milk, orange juice
TOUCH: sandpaper, small piece of rough concrete, piece of basalt (rough-textured volcanic rock)
SOUND: shrill whistle, soft whistle, unusual "beep"
SIGHT: different colors, geometric shapes

Note the possibility of introducing a game quality with timed competition given the appropriate context and proper child–child, child–teacher rapport. The complexity of the task can be varied considerably by type, e.g., olfactory tasks prove more difficult than sight tasks. Sounds tend to be more difficult than touch. And tasks can also be varied in complexity within a type, e.g., choosing more obscure odors or surfaces whose textures vary less. Two things should be immediately apparent about this kind of dialogue activity. First, the knowledge source person gets sustained practice in developing, describing, and qualifying talk skills; choosing descriptors of detail and ways to combine them (often by analogy–metaphor types). The information-acquisition person gets practice in developing questioning skills, not only in shaping individual questions, but in the very important area of building information, inferring, extrapolating from the logical chaining of one question to another—the systematic building of information-acquisition strategies.

2. Allow one child to see how to do something, e.g., see how a puzzle fits together, see how a part fits into a machine, see how to solve a riddle or problem, see how to locate something on a map. Present a second child with the necessary material or things. Then have the first child explain how to do or find the thing required.

3. Present one child with information which allows a perception of why something has happened or taken place. For example, show a picture of a child on crutches. Whisper to the child what happened to the person in the picture. The second person then must learn what or why something has taken place by careful and selective questioning. In a contest, the child who asks fewest questions is the winner. Notice that in this third type of dialogue situation, the increased talk responsibility is on the inquirer rather than the informer or explainer.

A more-informal kind of dialogue activity is the project or problem assignment which calls for the cooperative effort of two people: preparing a skit, researching a topic or subject, etc. This can be either short-range or long-range; and forms can shift according to the age and sophistication level of the students. It is not likely to be used extensively in the primary grades but should become more central by the intermediate grades. In this kind of activity, the natural interaction opportunities work with the entire range of language producing and consuming skills: talking, writing, reading, and listening. Some possibilities include: planning a play to be presented before the class;

preparing a ten-minute report on issue X; preparing a plan for a class trip to the museum which can be presented to the teacher; and preparing a place in the kindergarten room for a new pair of guinea pigs. The two-person dialogue is an instrumental part of most larger talk situations, e.g., small group discussion and dramatic improvisation-interpretation. However, since its character is muffled by such larger audience contexts, it is important to remember the need for dialogue as a separate talk entity.

Small Group Discussion

In many respects, small group discussion represents the ultimate in the talk curriculum. Though limited in range in some factors of circumstance—it typically focuses only on the Personal-You audience and in the Informal setting—it represents the highest order of human relations and language interaction. Larger group cooperation finds its roots here, and the individual has the opportunity to operate with all talk types: asserting, inquiring, and exploring. In addition, the subject addressed can be extremely diverse and cross-discipline. Ability to function well in a small group discussion setting means the student is bringing both verbal facility and ability to relate personally with others into tune with each other. One can assert oneself when the situation calls for it, pull back, or pull others out. Small group discussion represents an opportunity to develop languaging, thinking, and human relations skills, at the same time learning about a number of diverse subjects and concepts.

Here are some guidelines for designing group discussion activities.

1. Keep groups small, ideally three to five members. With practice, size can be increased somewhat, but generally it should not exceed seven members.

2. Be certain group member roles are clear, and the assignment is understood by all. In nearly every type of small group activity, there should be a chairperson assigned the responsibility of facilitating smooth operation of the group, and a secretary to record the group efforts and conclusions. These roles, of course, should be moved around among the students.

3. Consider the size of your room, number and arrangement of chairs, location of physical obstacles, etc., then design an orderly system for

moving the class into and out of small group settings. Each child should know the specific job and route to follow. Remember that one of the more troublesome matters to overcome in small group operations is the physical rearrangement procedures. If they are clean and orderly, it helps set a tone for the rest of the operation.

4. Begin with task-oriented, problem-solving types of small group activity with a very specific charge. Exploring groups should come only after experience in other formats.

5. Keep the first small group activities short, 15-20 minutes, perhaps less in the primary grades. Lengthen time gradually. Eventually, some small group activities can be extended through several weeks, with groups researching particular issues or problems.

6. Assign groups and leadership roles within groups in the beginning stages. Strive for group balance, so that there will be less likelihood of frustration for individuals who happen to get in with an ill-matched membership. Be aware of personality differences, and try to keep these from frustrating the entire group.

7. In later stages, consider interest groups where youngsters interested in a similar theme or issue can work together. Be very careful, however, not to allow the groups to become a matter of friends vs. enemies.

8. Although the teacher role is essentially one of learning instigator and group operations facilitator, once internal group rapport is developed, move into and out of groups as a member on occasion. Be careful not to allow your presence to intimidate group operations, however.

9. Remember that two-person argumentation within a group is often the source of frustration and can cause the collapse of group processes. Work toward developing smooth techniques for cutting off such debate, e.g., draw in other group members so that consensus can conclude one way or the other. Move digressors back to the issue at hand when group process appears to be breaking down.

10. Be sure necessary resources and materials are available when groups need them. Try to anticipate needs as much as possible.

11. Do not make quick and total changes in group memberships. Interaction patterns and internal group rapport can break down completely. Make changes gradually and few at a time.

12. Remember that small groups represent an activity where some

sense of closure is desirable. Structure situations to assure maximum likelihood of such closure.

13. Remember, when designing small group activities, the factors of the talk model and the abilities of the talkers. Try to coordinate the two.

There are three different types of small groups: simulation, exploration, and problem-solving.

Simulation is an activity which requires the members of the group to assume certain roles and simulate a specific event or tackle a specifically assigned topic, for example, to serve as members of a jury to decide a case. There are certain similarities between this small group operation and that of the small group in the dramatic mode. Perhaps, in some sense, this can be projected as the dramatic continuum extreme in interpretation. Since it is a role-playing kind of operation, simulation allows for the teacher to structure things across the range of communication factors of circumstance to assure wide talk context experience. The following are some examples the teacher might want to consider: "We need to decide whether we should go fishing or swimming for the weekend." or "How should we spend $100 for our room?" or "Assume that you are members of the mayor's city council and you must decide whether taxes should be raised to build a hospital for the city since it doesn't have one."

Exploratory small group discussion is the least structured of all, so it requires a sense of confidence on the teacher's part that the children can operate successfully with minimal guidance. Expectations by both teacher and group should reflect this freedom of operation. Approaches should be the object, not specific answers to problems or issues. This kind of small group operation can best be thought of in terms of "brainstorming," since it addresses virtually any subject or issue. The following questions may stimulate exploratory small groups: "What might we do on our class trip?," "We don't have books for this subject, so what should we do?" "What are some ideas for a class play?" and "How could we design a school building?"

The problem-solving small group is the most versatile and perhaps most easily structured small group operation of the three. It is also one of the best types to begin with, since it can be very specific and closure-oriented in intent, e.g. "Decide whether we should use our class money to buy a pair of gerbils for the room." The direction of this group can vary considerably, however, in at least four different ways. Consider *extrapolation* in the questions "Look at this information. What

conclusions can you reach?" or "X,Y and Z have taken place. Why?" Or *projection* in the questions "If X,Y and Z happen, what will result?" or "What is a reasonable ending for this incomplete story?" or "What will happen to the country if we continue to use up our energy sources at the current rate?" Consider *interrogation* in the following directions: "Interview the new student." and "Find out his or her interests and hobbies." Or, finally, *evaluation* in the judgments: "Which of these two decisions do you think is better?" or "Do you like your new books?" or "Do you think we should do the same thing during play time today as we did yesterday?" A fundamental part of the problem-solving small group operation is the use of group decisions. Plans should be made well in advance for reporting findings and informing other groups so that the purpose of the group operation will justify the final product.

Dramatic Talk

The dramatic mode of expression has long been considered an important domain of the language arts for a number of reasons. It is one of the most immediate and expressive of the creative arts. As an outlet for divergent thinking, it is one of the more obvious modes of Moving-Out Exploring talk. Drama, like poetry, values expressive language—both verbal and nonverbal—with ambiguity by design an important characteristic. As in all Moving-Out language, the points of reference are important only to the extent that they generate additional points of reference or additional hypotheses. In a world which often seems intent on squelching creativity rather than honoring it, dramatics serves important creative roles. It enables the developing child to project an artificial reality for testing ideas, wishes, and dreams without risk of permanent personal commitment. The child can move in and out of a created world and in the process try on ideas, test out beliefs, and, generally, just "look around." In addition, it enables the child to dwell in metaphor, possibly the most valuable method available to us for comparing, contrasting, proving and or analyzing aspects of reality. The metaphor as talk and writing tool is important; as technique in dramatics for creating and testing reality it is crucial. Because of its flexibility and wide-ranging structure, dramatics is a superb mode for plying the full range of the communication factors—circumstance and condition—to accommodate the varying strengths and weaknesses of the developing child. And, since its physical actions and or external

dialogue will be observable as a verbal mode of expression, dramatics places the child in situations that link internal and external talk.

Before launching into the design of a dramatic activities component of the talk curriculum, the teacher may want to pause and consider the following guidelines.

(1) The developmental stage for the child will have impact for your decision-making and evaluation techniques. As a general rule, expect to provide more structure and context for children in the early primary grades; expect more depth, subtlety, and range in dramatic involvements in the upper intermediate and middle school grades.

(2) Select ideas diverse enough to call attention to the varying senses of audience, settings, purposes, subjects, and talk-use types. Consider your proposed ideas in terms of different settings. Remember, however, that the factors of circumstance and talk-use types are format concepts necessary for structuring the talk situation. They are meant to be assists to you rather than formal concepts to be explicitly taught to your students.

(3) Design activities which call for introduction of oral talk as well as nonexternal talk, but begin with pantomime in its strictest nonexternal talk sense. Then move to more formalized role-playing, utilizing oral language.

(4) Remember that the essential purposes and objectives of creative drama as an instructional tool are not tied to performance. Eventually many of your students may want to go into dramatics for serious, performance-oriented purposes, but for now their roles in classroom activities are for learning purposes only.

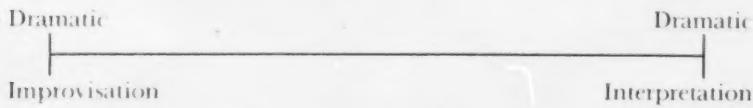
(5) Be a scavenger! Variety and range of expressive potential can be shaped by props, and virtually anything can serve as a prop. In the primary grades, for instance, the following things prove useful: scraps of wood and lumber (visit your local lumberyard and woodworking shops), bits and pieces of cloth (hand puppets and flannel boards emerge from such), empty cardboard boxes (large ones make fine puppet theaters), and empty wax paper, toilet tissue and paper towel rolls. In the intermediate and middle school grades, items such as old clothing and theatre makeup are valuable.

(6) Capitalize upon the dramatic mode as an important route to (a) additional talk activities. Discuss the performance in a noncritical fashion, for instance, "Why do you suppose Mary moved her arms this

way at the end?" or "How would you have shown how to chop down the tree?"; (b) motivate writing activities and follow up with written scripts with character dialogue and descriptive narration; (c) motivate reading activities, and follow up with reading experiences addressing similar themes, and (d) motivate additional dramatic experiences and develop the ideas in a newer or more comprehensive treatment e.g. add another role or so, alter the setting, reinterpret the idea to add or reduce complexity.

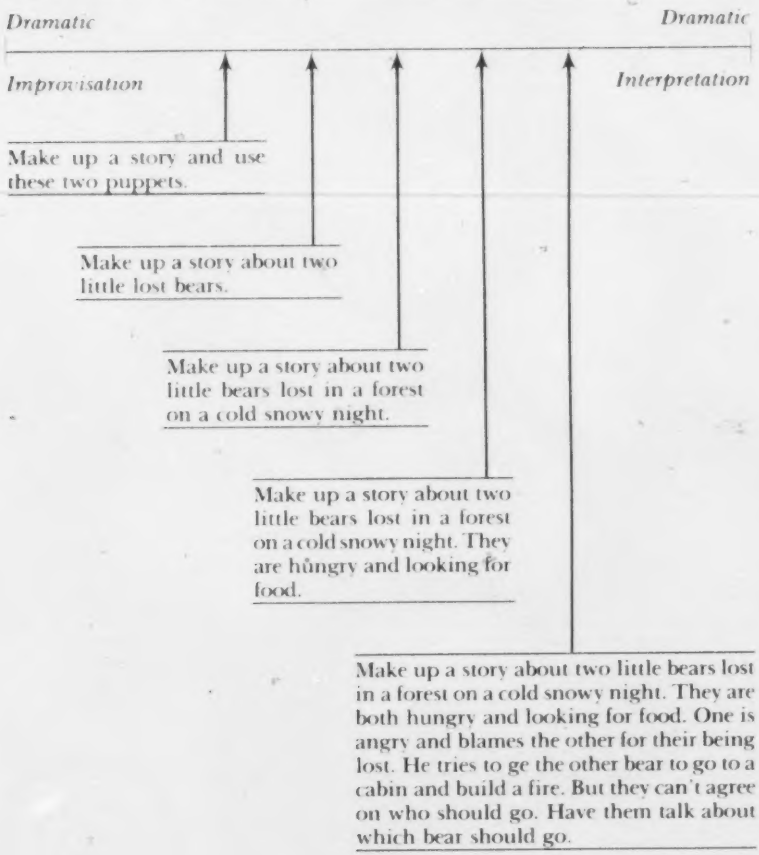
(7) Finally, perhaps the most important consideration is the knowledge that creative drama can, in very personal ways, uncover the soul and bare the nature of who we are. As a creative act it is especially sensitive. Be careful about playing critic. Encourage, laugh with and not at, and don't hesitate to ask of yourself what you ask of your students.

Dramatic expression may be thought of as falling on a continuum. Consider the following diagram.



In the case of improvisation, the participant is provided a maximum freedom of structure, as in, "Here are two hand puppets. Make up a story involving both." Or, for older children, "Two people who are fans of two different football teams meet. Make up a story with hand puppets to show their opinions." The opposite extreme is interpretation, where a script is provided and players are asked to read parts in an interpretive way. The essential difference is the amount of structure the teacher provides or demands. The tighter the structure and more explicit the demands, the more activity moves toward the interpretive end of the continuum. The more freedom you allow and the less structure you provide, the more the activity moves toward the improvisation end of the continuum. It is important to note that the place of the activity on the continuum is not determined by the activity classification per se. For instance, the teaching technique of using hand puppetry is especially effective in the primary grades. However, the teacher may shape the function of such an activity in terms of the dramatic continuum by the extent to which he or she structures or makes explicit details of the assignment with the puppets. The chart which follows is an application of the continuum to the talk activity of hand puppetry.

Use of Puppetry on the Dramatic Continuum


Dramatic
Dramatic
Improvisation
Interpretation
Make up a story and use these two puppets.
Make up a story about two little lost bears.
Make up a story about two little bears lost in a forest on a cold snowy night.
Make up a story about two little bears lost in a forest on a cold snowy night. They are hungry and looking for food.
Make up a story about two little bears lost in a forest on a cold snowy night. They are both hungry and looking for food. One is angry and blames the other for their being lost. He tries to ge the other bear to go to a cabin and build a fire. But they can't agree on who should go. Have them talk about which bear should go.

By varying the amount of information, direction, and contingency factors, the teacher at any grade can move children into varying degrees of improvisation or interpretation. Another way for the teacher to look at the improvisation-interpretation continuum is to consider ideas for activities in terms of different settings. The chart below gives some examples of talk activities on both ends of the continuum using all four settings: ceremonial, formal, informal, and intimate.

Ceremonial Setting

Improvisation	Interpretation
Pretend you are a minister performing a marriage.	Enact the beginning or opening of a trial court. Each of you read the following scripts.
Pretend you are an ancient priest making an offering to the gods.	Enact the final rites for an Aztec Chief who has died. Try to portray the personality of the character assigned to you as that personality is described on your sheet (details provided).
Pretend you are a judge administering the oath of office to a new president.	Enact the signing of an important peace treaty according to the roles assigned each of you as representatives of the major powers of the world.
Pretend you are a lion trainer performing with several lions.	
Pretend you are a music conductor conducting a large orchestra.	

Formal Settings

Improvisation	Interpretation
Pretend you are delivering a very important speech to Congress.	Give an oral reading of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.
Pretend you are a reknowned scholar answering questions of a group of from around the world.	Pretend you are a plantation owner with this set of beliefs about slavery (handout with such information). Deliver an address to a state legislature trying to convince them of the value of slavery.
Pretend you are a presidential candidate addressing a political rally.	

Informal Settings

Improvisation	Interpretation
Step on a hot coal.	The five of you plan a fast-break basketball play using a plan like this (handout).
Be a yo-yoist.	Try to convince this policeman that you shouldn't get a ticket. The reasons you may use are listed on this paper.
Be a star basketball player	
Be the prettiest girl in school.	

Ride a motorcycle.

Be the smartest girl in school.

The three of you plan a bank robbery.

Have an argument with your best friend.

Be a pencil sharpener.

Convince your teacher that you should be given more time for your assignment. The reasons on this sheet might be useful.

Intimate Settings

Improvisation

Reveal to a close friend some exciting personal news.

Ask the girl (boy) in the corner to dance.

A book you have just read has upset you very much. Let your best friend know your feelings.

Interpretation

Do an oral reading of this excerpt from *Huck Finn* (a dialogue between Huck and Jim on the raft).

Here are the conditions (handouts with background information). Now explain to your parents why you had to disobey their request that you remain home all evening.

A consideration of dramatic activities in terms of the improvisation—interpretation continuum suggests some important points. First, although dramatic expression can be, in its more formally prepared form, presented for a generalized audience (in the case of the school setting, classmates will likely constitute a Personal–You audience), as instructional and learning mode audience is determined by the internal action of the unfolding drama. In the case where a child is manipulating two hand puppets with an ongoing dialogue, audience is strictly Self. Where the child is involved in improvisational exchange or interpreting exchange with others in a group of players, sense of audience will of course shift. A second point to be made is that functioning near the improvisation end of the continuum forces the participant to rely more on personal experiences, utilize the internal speech continuum more intensively, and be more dependent upon nonverbal language to enhance the communication. Third, functioning near the interpretation end of the continuum forces the participant to interpret more

intensively the dramatic intent of others who have structured the situation, rather than to rely upon personal design or preference, and to consider more carefully factors of communication outside the internal operations of the unfolding drama.

Another kind of dramatic talk activity is *pantomime*—silent role playing, usually without props, although by varying amount of props the teacher can contol the improvisation—interpretation point. The participant uses bodily movement and gesture to portray a story, depict an event, or describe an act. It is one of the easiest ways to introduce the child to creative drama and offers an excellent vehicle for moving across the factors of circumstance and talk-use types. The following is a possible primary grades scene:

> TEACHER: Jimmy, pretend you are a monster roaming around in the middle of the room. Do not talk but let us see what you are by how you move. Now, Joan, pretend you are a hunter sneaking up on the monster. Billy, you pretend you are a stranger just wandering along not suspecting a monster is nearby.

Notice how the audience changes for each participant with the addition of new roles. Consider also how the purpose or direction can change with additional plot structure brought to the scene by the new participants.

Before building toward small group pantomime, however, children need ample experience individually, then with one another, then with a third, and so on. As other participants are added, the sense of audience moves out and becomes more complex. In addition, talk-use types and or their corresponding body movements increase in variety. For example, what might initially be perceived as a situation which calls for describing or asserting behavior may begin to demand inquiry behavior and then possibly moving-in or-out behavior. In pantomime as well as most other dramatic types, introduction of oral language to complement nonverbal talk should be provided but should, in most instances, follow silent pantomime. The introduction of oral language moves the participant from mimist to role player, a move which will serve the participant throughout all domains of the talk curriculum. A possible way to consider pantomime and role-playing ideas is by placing them on a matrix like the following one, and examining their potential in terms of the factors of range.

Single Person Pantomime

IDEA *Pretend you are*	AUDIENCE	SETTING	PURPOSE	SUBJECT	TALK TYPE IMPLICIT
a monster	Self and Personal You	Informal	To Describe	Animal	Describe Propose
an airplane	"	"	"	Thing	"
an elephant	"	"	"	Animal	"
a kite	"	"	"	Thing	"
a clock	"	"	"	Thing	"
made of rubber	"	"	"	Quality	"

Two Person Pantomime

A: telling a joke B: listening	Personal You	Intimate	To Explain	Story	Describe Propose
A: a mouse B: a cat	"	Informal	To Describe	Action	"
A: each in a matching hand B: each playing something different	"	"	"	Event	"

Small Group Pantomime

one of a small group of astronauts landing on a new planet	Personal You and Unknown You	Informal	To Describe	Anything	Describe Propose
part of a group on a trip to a museum	"	"	"	Objects	"
in a group of witnesses of an accident involving a bus and a bicycle	"	Formal	To Describe Explain	Event	Describe Inquire
on a soccer team whose members are disagreeing with the umpire	"	Informal	To Persuade	"	Propose
part of a group of children on their first visit to a farm	"	"	To Describe	Objects & Animals	Describe

As a general rule, then, the more participants, the more demanding and complex the pantomime. This is not to suggest a sort of logical building of experiences on a longitudinal scale (single-person pantomime in kindergarten, two-person in first grade, and so on). Each grade must provide full play on the dramatic range. Expectations of performance should vary, but development through the years is contingent upon a recognition of that continuing admonition—to know where the

student has been, where the student is, and where the student might be going.

Still another kind of dramatic talk activity is charades—a nonverbal acting out of well-known phrases, titles, or statements. The audience attempts to guess the correct title or phrase from the body movements and gestures. It is soon possible to develop a generalized set of gestures and procedures of order and sequence, a minimum symbolic language which the audience comes to comprehend in the course of a performance.

In a useful publication, *An Idea Book for Acting Out and Writing Language, K-8*, (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1974 (pp. 36–37)) G. L. Gerbrandt outlines the following suggestions which can be useful in providing a proper context for charades:

1. Define category; i.e., movie, TV, saying, song, book, etc.
   book: hands together, then apart—like a book falling open at the middle
   play: pose with arms out and mouth open
   movie: make motions of a movie camera—one hand clenched, the other in motion beside it, like turning a handle in circular motion vertically
   proper name: place clenched fist on chest
   famous person: circle hands over heart to indicate medals
   song: stretch arms out, open mouth
   quotation: make peace and victory signs, and wiggle fingers
   TV: draw a box in front of you

2. Act out each individual segment, word, or syllable in your category. First indicate the number of words in all by holding up that many fingers.

3. Use individual symbols to act out words or units as they are needed, such as the following:
   prepositions: use both hands, one hand stationary and clenched, the other hand moving to represent the word—i.e., in, on, over, under, etc.
   small words: (the, an, and, a, in, to) are shown by holding thumb and index finger closely together
   I: point to eye
   sounds like: pull earlobe
   whole idea: move arms in circle in front of you

syllables: place number of fingers against inner arm to indicate number of syllables
compound words: point both index fingers up and then bring them together
longer word: pull imaginary taffy
shorter word: make a chopping motion with one hand onto the other
start over: wave hands like an umpire indicating "safe"
antonyms: put palms of hands together and turn hands over
synonyms: hand moves in circle toward you
numbers: use number of fingers and hit against palm of hand
up, down: point up or down
he, she: point to boy or girl
animal: get down on hands and knees

Though probably not too likely an activity much before the second grade, charades proves both useful and interesting activity with older children. In terms of our model of the talk situation, charades focuses in very tightly on the Personal You audience and Informal to Intimate setting. This both limits the range of its use and offers excellent opportunities to tighten in on specific contexts for practice and new experiences.

Somewhat related to pantomime and charades, *small group improvisation* requires participants to take a theme, idea or incident and enact the situation with minimum props and structured guidance. As in pantomime and charades, body movement and gesture are important. Although it is interesting and useful to improvise without dialogue, external talk should be built into most small group work, since coordination of efforts and movement toward an enactment is far more complex than in individual dramatic efforts. It must be remembered, however, that within the physical constraints of many classrooms, nonverbal improvisations have an advantage in that a number of groups can be started at the same time in different parts of the room with minimal interference from each other. As the teacher structures the dramatic context more thoroughly, small group dramatics becomes more interpretive and performance-oriented in nature. Although this can be worthwhile, it moves closer to drama as entertainment for an audience and away from dramatics as a basic learning experience.

Roles for the Language Arts Teacher To Consider

1. You are chairperson of a local school district's language arts curriculum committee. React to each of the following situations:

   a. The school district administrators are being pressured by an unhappy school board and parents. Reading scores are down. Since reading is being taught as a separate course of study anyway, the administrators want to devote more time to specific instruction in reading. In order to get that time, it is being recommended that most of the talk activities part of the language arts program be eliminated and the additional time be used to teach basic reading skills. How do you respond to the administrators?

   b. A number of teachers on your committee are opposed to oral language activities, contending that they are disruptive and do not get at the important language arts skills they are responsible for. Persuade them that oral language should be a part of the program. The school superintendent asks you to speak to parents at the next PTA meeting and briefly describe the new oral language curriculum component your group has designed. You will be allowed 30 minutes to speak to them. Prepare such a talk.

   c. The curriculum committee has decided that you, as chairperson, should write the rationale for the talk curriculum.

Write a three-page rationale suitable for use in your district's curriculum guide.

d. An irate parent of one of your students visits you at school. The parent contends that the child is having difficulty with reading and writing, yet understands that for the past week the child has been doing "play things"—"pretending to be a butterfly and junk like that." The parent wants to know how creative dramatics is going to help the child. Defend creative dramatics.

2. Outline a set of goals and objectives for a K-8 talk curriculum.

3. Prepare a lesson plan for teaching a unit in creative dramatics for a level within (K-8) that you are most interested in teaching. Introduce your unit with appropriate background, describing a hypothetical school setting. Move the plan from pantomime through small group improvisation or interpretation and follow-up work.

4. Consider the following in a small group setting:

a. You are a kindergarten teacher in a large metropolitan school. You have arranged for a trip to a large dairy farm. Most of the children have not been on a farm before. In a small group discussion, do the following: (1) list several pre-trip motivating activities the children might experience; (2) decide how much and what kind of languaging experiences which they will have that you should capitalize upon; and (3) list several talk activities and possible follow-ups you can utilize after the trip.

b. You teach in a middle school. Most of your students have had considerable past experience in small group discussion. As the result of a school district consolidation, you suddenly are faced with the arrival of several new students. These youngsters have had little small group experience. (1) What are some specific things you can do to work them into things? (2) What kind of specific performance problems should you anticipate with them? (3) The school administrator offers you the assistance of two paraprofessionals to deal with the new situation. Out of your 30 students, 10 have little small group experience. Identify a few ideas you might have for utilizing paraprofessionals.

5. The school administrator informs you that the school has just gotten an excellent buy on a number of small, easily operated cassette tape recorders. You may have several for your classroom alone. List several specific activities which you might develop for utilization of this new equipment.

6. Discuss the factors of circumstance—setting, audience, purpose, and subject—and how the language arts teachers might utilize these concepts in designing a talk curriculum component.

7. In small groups consider the following activity and related questions:

a. Provide a child with a cassette tape recorder and the following instructions: (1) Pretend you have been on an overnight camping trip with the scouts. Your very best friend also belongs to scouts and was to have gone along but became ill at the last minute. During the night a bear came into camp, and stole the food of another close friend of the both of you. Make up a story about some interesting things for the bear to do. You want to share the camping experience with your ill friend, so tape it and let your friend listen to it. (2) Pretend that you want to tell the story to a completely unknown audience. You don't know them, nor do they know you. Tape the story again for this audience. (3) In small groups, talk about the differences in the two versions. How are they alike? How are they different? What can you learn about telling stories to two different kinds of audiences?

b. Was this a good oral language activity? At what grade levels would it be most appropriate? Why? What kind of activities should precede this? What kind should follow?

8. What kind of logic do you expect to be reflected in the talk of a child in the early primary grades? What are some dialogue and small group assignments which might be useful in later grades but are *not* applicable in the early primary grades? What attributes of your examples preclude them from the early grades?

9. What are some examples of language reflecting higher thought processes which you might expect to see in the intermediate and middle school years?

Bibliography

Key:

T= primarily theoretical in orientation

R= primarily research in orientation

P= primarily practice and implementation in orientation

•••= somewhat difficult; background or previous reading in the area assumed

••= average difficulty; requires careful attention but not contingent upon previous training or experience

•= relatively easy reading; content is basic and requires or assumes no previous work in the field

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Thought and Language

Church, J. *Language and the Discovery of Reality*. New York: Vintage Books, 1961.

Though not a new book, this paperback continues to be one of the more perceptive and forward looking of theoretical treatments of cognitive development. Language plays a central role in Church's theory. (T, •••)

Furth, H. *Piaget for Teachers*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970.

Hans Furth is one of the more outstanding interpreters of the work of Piaget. His book attempts to lay out essentials of Piaget's thinking and then suggest specific ways to teach "thinking skills" to elementary grade children based upon Piagetian developmental stages. (T, P, ••)

Ginsburg, H., & Opper, S. *Piaget's Theory of Intellectual Development*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969.

This volume is one of the best single treatments of the work of Piaget with relevance for the teacher. Readable and nontechnical, the book

includes a nice summary of each of the stages of development in the child with appropriate examples and illustrations. (T, R, **)

Hooper, F. H., Brainerd, C. J., & Sipple, T. S. *A Representative Series of Piagetian Concrete Operations Tasks*. Theoretical Paper No. 57. Madison: Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, 1975.

This is one of a number of reports and papers from the Project on Children's Learning and Development operating through the Wisconsin R & D Center. This report is a survey and technical evaluation of selected Piagetian tasks designed to test for concrete operations associated with the developmental period of middle childhood.

An appendix contains a variety of these tasks which are administered on an individual basis and require minimum materials. (T, R, **)

Horowitz, F. D. (Ed.) *Review of Child Development Research* (Vol. 4). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.

This is a collection of major papers reflecting contemporary theoretical and research concerns in child development. The volume contains important statements on cognitive development, as well as language development.

The Glucksberg, Krauss, and Higgins paper, "The Development of Referential Communication Skills" is indicative of a renewed interest in the functional uses of language by children and how those uses develop. (T, R, **)

Inhelder, B.; & Piaget, J. *The Early Growth of Logic in the Child*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1969.

A detailed account of the famous developmentalist's work in cognitive abilities of the young child, the work includes abundant classic examples and useful insights for the teacher about cognitive strengths and limitations of the developing child. (T, R, ***)

Piaget, J. *The Language and Thought of the Child*. New York: New American Library, 1974.

This is a reprint of the classic work by Piaget done more than fifty years ago, in the early 1920's. The book includes bountiful examples of the child's language, especially when the child is asked to deal with tasks requiring various levels of cognitive operations. Some excellent insights here on what teachers might expect to find in the language of the child. (T, R, **)

Sanders, N. *Classroom Questions: What Kinds?* New York: Harper & Row, 1966.

This is a fine book which can assist the classroom teacher in adding a structured variety to question-asking to assure a full attention to the cognitive range of the learner. Readable and nontechnical. (T, P, *)

Schmidt, W. H. O. *Child Development: The Human, Cultural, and Educational Context*. New York: Harper & Row, 1973.

Schmidt's paperback is both thorough and readable in its treatment of the total range of factors which bear on the developing child. It includes especially intriguing chapters on humans as symbolizing and languaging creatures. (T, **)

Vygotsky, L. S. *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1962.

Lev Vygotsky was the Russian psychologist who initiated the first serious work with the concept of "inner speech." This is the seminal book describing this concept and some of his supportive research. Though conceptually deep, the book is not overly technical and provides an excellent introduction into the inner speech idea. (T, R, **)

Watts, A. F. *The Language and Mental Development of Children*. London: George G. Harrop & Company, Ltd., 1966.

Although not a new publication, this book still is exciting and important basic reading for elementary teachers. It treats both the role of language in the mental growth of children and specific kinds of language activities which are central to such growth. Excellent reading. (T, R, P, **)

Werner, H., & Kaplan, B. *Symbol Formation: An Organismic–Developmental Approach to Language and the Expression of Thought*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967.

This work explicates the organismic developmental theory of Werner and Kaplan. This is followed with a series of empirical studies related to premises of their developmental theory. There are especially interesting reports on the notions of psychological distance and inner speech. (T, R, ***)

Language Development

Cazden, C. B. *Child Language and Education*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1972.

This is an important book which covers in fairly nontechnical fashion a diverse range of language topics any elementary teacher should be familiar with—usage, language correction, restricted and elaborated codes, bi-lingualism, dialects, black English, etc. (T, R, **)

Dale, S. *Language Development: Structure and Function*. (2nd ed.) New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976.

This work presents both a treatment of selected basics in transformational grammar and corresponding acquisition and development of those elements by the child. A revision of an earlier (1972) work, this book

treats in more detail the semantics of language, referential categories and the notion of case grammar concepts. It thus reflects some of the more current concerns with meaning of utterances, as well as with their syntax. (T, R, **)

Deese, J. *Psycholinguistics*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Inc., 1970.

This is one of the best of a handful of small books intended to introduce the beginner to basic concepts of psycholinguistics. Concise, immensely readable, Deese introduces the nonlinguist to important notions such as competence vs. performance, meaning theories, and biological and sociological contexts of language development and use. (T, R, *)

Hopper, R. T., & Naremore, R. C. *Children's Speech: A Practical Introduction to Communication Development*. New York: Harper & Row, 1973.

The Hopper and Naremore work is undoubtedly the most basic and simplified account of language acquisition and development in children currently available. Though obviously not intended as an in depth treatment, it is still a book of substance and integrity. An excellent first reader for the novice in this area. (T, R, P, *)

Loban, W. *Language Development: Kindergarten Through Grade 12*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1976.

This is a research monograph which reports findings of a longitudinal study of the language development of 211 school children from kindergarten through the 12th grade. Loban was particularly interested in differences between children who use language effectively and those who do not. This work might well stand as a classic in language arts research for years to come. (R, **)

Reed, C. E. *The Learning of Language*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1971.

One of the few books which gives considerable attention to the language of the older child. Comprehensive essays by John Carroll and William Lado can prove helpful for the middle school teacher. (T, R, **)

Smith, F., & Miller, G. A. (Eds.) *The Genesis of Language*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1966.

A collection of papers and responses to those papers on psycholinguistics, this volume has an especially readable paper by David McNeill. It addresses the nature and function of developmental psycholinguistics and offers a rather full treatment of his thinking on pivot and open class grammars in very young children. (T, **)

Winsor, C. B. (Ed.) *Dimensions of Language Experience*. New York: Agathon Press, Inc., 1975.

A book of essays, Winsor's volume largely treats current theoretical and research concerns in psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics. (T, ***)

The Talk Curriculum

Barnes, D., Britton, J., et al. *Language, the Learner and the School*. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969.

A research report on classroom language interactions in British schools, this book contains useful ideas on items such as questioning techniques which teachers might employ to encourage classroom talk. (R, P, *)

Britton, J. (Ed.) *Talking and Writing: A Handbook for English Teachers*, London: Methuan & Co., Ltd., 1967.

A collection of essays, this book is addressed primarily to the elementary teacher. It advances the importance of oral language activities and writing experiences for children. It contains both articles devoted to theory and rationale and some to practice. (T, P, **)

Cazden, C. B., John, V. P., & Hymes, D. (Eds.) *Functions of Language in the Classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1972.

This is an excellent collection of essays designed to acquaint teachers with important notions from both psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, and secondly, to suggest specific things teachers can do to enhance class interaction and communication. (T, P, **)

Dixon, J., *Growth Through English*. Reading, England: National Association for the Teaching of English, Third Edition, 1975.

This work was an outgrowth of the now famous Dartmouth Seminar of 1966; a meeting of American and British language arts authorities at a time when there was considerable difference in thinking as to how best to teach the language arts. Dixon's book lays out in explicit fashion what came to be perceived as the British position. The book treats oral language and writing as fundamental routes to the goals of the language arts. It decries too much content per se, formal study of concepts and lack of attention to the development of creative skills. This is important reading in theory for every language arts teacher. (T, P, *)

Halliday, M. A. K. *Explorations in the Functions of Language*. London: Edward Arnold, 1974.

Halliday presents five different essays on the social functions of language. The first essay, "Relevant Models of Language," is especially important for teachers in the primary grades. (T, *)

Kean, J. M., & Personke, C. *The Language Arts: Teaching and Learning in the Elementary School*, N.Y., St. Martin's Press, 1976.

This language arts textbook is different in that it contains significant content-oriented units on the nature of language itself as well as a brief, but well done, account of language acquisition and development in children. Separate chapters on topics such as "semantics" appear as content units in the publication. However, it is a methods text, and as

such, contains helpful recommended techniques and strategies for teaching all aspects of the language arts, including talk.

King, M. L., Emans, R., & Cianciolo, P. J. (Eds.) *A Forum for Focus*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1973.

A comprehensive collection of papers on the elementary language arts. This anthology contains both theoretical and practical articles in oral language and related topics. (T, P, *)

Ludsteen, S. W. *Children Learn to Communicate*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976.

A methods text for prospective language arts teachers, this book is also excellent reading for those practicing teachers with limited background in the utilization of talk in a language arts classroom setting. It provides both a theoretical base for oral language activities and useful suggestions for implementing various talk activities. (T, P, *)

Moffett, J. (Ed.) *Interaction*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1973.

A K-12 language arts program based upon the Moffett rationale, which calls for major involvement with language, doing rather than studying about language. The materials are diverse with kits of paperbacks, games, cassettes, etc. Oral language and dramatics are central to the materials. Detailed activities and teacher lesson plans are included. (P, *)

Primary English. National Association for the Teaching of English, Bulletin Vol. III, No. 3, Autumn 1966.

This is a journal issue published by teachers of English in Great Britain and available through the National Council of Teachers of English in this country. This particular issue contains excellent practical suggestions for instituting talk activities in the elementary grades. (P, *)

Robinson, H. A., & Burrows, A. T. *Teacher Effectiveness in Elementary Language Arts*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1974.

One of the most recent reviews of research in elementary language arts. Though not comprehensive, it does identify a number of important areas of interest and offers a quick glance at selected research. (R, *)

Shane, H. G., Walden, J., & Green, R. (Eds.) *Interpreting Language Arts Research for the Teacher*. Washington, DC: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1971.

A summary of research in a wide range of language arts areas, e.g., reading, spelling, creative writing, and speaking. Each section is authored by a different person, so thoroughness of the reviews and format of presentation is quite mixed. (R, *)

Van Allen, R. *Language Experiences in Communication*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1976.

This volume attempts to develop a language experience approach to all aspects of communication, including but not limited to reading. Van Allen's book calls for careful attention to the development of oral language skills crucial for communication. Important suggestions for the development of these skills make up the heart of the book. (P, *)

Walden, J. (Ed.) *Oral Language and Reading*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1969.

This paperback contains essays by nationally recognized authorities in language and provides important rationale for the role of talk in the developing reader. (T, *)

Dramatics

Aesthetic Education: A Social and Individual Need. St. Louis: CEMREL, Inc., 1973.

This is a federally funded project with extensive materials for use by the elementary language arts teacher in creative dramatics and small group work. Especially in the primary grades, the materials are very complete, well-designed, and beautifully conceived to focus upon aesthetic experiences. (P, *)

Duke, C. R. *Creative Dramatics and English Teaching*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1974.

A thorough treatment of creative dramatics, its philosophical and psychological roots, and its importance as an educational tool. This book does an especially superb job of providing detailed practical examples of dramatic activities which are tied to an underlying rationale. An excellent resource in creative dramatics for all language arts teachers. (T, P, *)

Gerbrandt, G. L. *An Idea Book for Acting Out and Writing Language K-8*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1974.

This is a very practical handbook for the practicing teacher. Easy to read and follow suggestions for activities in pantomime, role-playing, charades, and small group operations are included. (P, *)

Gillis, E. *Creative Dramatics for All Children*. Association for Childhood Education International, 1973.

A practical little work with specific and varied suggestions for getting children into creative dramatics. There are special sections on topics such as creative dramatics for speakers of English as a second language and creative dramatics for the handicapped. There is also a useful annotated bibliography. (P, *)

Henry, M. W. (Ed.) *Creative Experiences in Oral Language*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1967.

Henry's book is a very useful handbook with both rationale and practical ideas for implementation of activities in dramatics. The wide-ranging topics include creative dramatics, choric interpretation, storytelling and children's theatre. A very useful book for the beginning teacher in elementary language arts. (P, *)

Moffett, J. *A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K–13: A Handbook for Teachers*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1973.

This volume by Moffett proposes a rationale for a talk and writing centered language arts program. Many of his ideas reflect the recommended directions which grew out of the Dartmouth Seminar. There are especially useful and practical ideas for dramatics and small group work. (T, P, **)

Self-Expression and Conduct: The Humanities. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1974.

This is a humanities program designed for the elementary grades. Its focus is aesthetics and values with a major emphasis upon dramatic experiences utilizing sense experiences. In addition, dialogue and small group discussion are activities designed to deal with values and values clarification. The program uses books and supplementary kits with diverse sense-oriented materials. Detailed lesson plans are included. (P, *)